

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Dudley L. Pickman, January 27, 1897

462 January 27th. 1897 Mr. Dudley L. Pickman. Dear Sir:—

Your note of January 25th. just received, with the enclosed paper regarding aid for the N. E. Industrial School, which I return herewith.

I am sorry that I cannot authorize the use of my name, as I do not believe in the value of the method of instruction pursued in that school, although I have the highest respect for Miss Swett, the Principal, and believe she is doing what she consciously believes to be the best for the deaf. I am sorry to know that the school is in financial difficulties. I had always supposed that it received aid from the State, as the American Annals of the Deaf even as lately as January 1897 reports it among the Public Schools Receiving State Aid. The statement in the paper you enclosed to the effect that state aid had been withdrawn from all institutions in any degree private is surely an error, for the Clarks School at Northampton, Mass., and the American School in Hartford, Conn. A both private corporations receive aid from the State of Massachusetts — the State pays a certain per capita amount for every Massachusetts pupil educated in these schools.

Although I do not approve of the N. E. Industrial School I certainly think that it should receive fairplay from the State, and receive a per capita allowance similar to that given to the Hartford School, which pursues the same method of instruction. I would be very glad if you would let me know what action the State has taken in regard to that school, for, if the State has shown any invidious distinction against it, by withdrawing aid from it and not from other private corporations, the school might rely upon my aid to remedy the injustice.

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Yours very sincerely, Alexander Graham Bell